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A WORD ABOUT FAIRS.

September is emphatically the month of fairs. Fair time is a season that every farmer should look forward to with pleasure. It is the holiday season in the farmer's year; and it should be enjoyed not only by the farmer himself, but by his hired men, his children, and most of all by his weary wife. We like the idea of shutting up house and all going to fair. Whatever objections there may be to patronizing most of the perambulating shows that frequent the country, none should exist to patronizing the local fair. It is an exhibition of the products of the county or neighborhood, an illustration of the industry and progress of the year. It is an occasion when the farmer's worth to the community is best appreciated; at fair time, if at no other, the farmer can regard himself as the equal of other men.

Grave objections have been urged against the manner in which most of our fairs are conducted. Complaints are made that agricultural societies do very little for the cause of agriculture, and that agricultural fairs are exhibitions of almost everything except the productions of the soil; or, at least, that farm products cut but a small figure in these annual gatherings. Complaints are also made that large sums are often paid to gymnasts, aeronauts, and other performers; and that objectionable private shows are admitted on the exhibition grounds.

In too many cases we must confess that these objections are legitimate. We have always considered it our duty to denounce these things so foreign to the original and true idea of an agricultural fair, or a holiday for the agricultural population. Our position is so well known upon this question that it is not necessary here to state it at any length. We believe that these gatherings are for the rural people—for the furthering of their interests, and to contribute to their enjoyment. If fairs cannot be supported without these outside attractions, with their attendant immoral influences, then the cause of agriculture can best be subserved without them. Side shows, outside or inside a fair ground, are a nuisance and a snare. They belong to the circus and the menagerie, if they belong anywhere. If they are to be tolerated at all, for the purpose of getting money into the treasury, and we believe this is the only argument ever urged in their favor, then let them have some remote corner, far from the instructive part of the exhibition, instead of permitting their proprietors to spread their tents on the most available part of the inclosure, or to make every day hideous with calls for patronage.

Perhaps the gravest objection that can be urged against the management of fairs is that things are not done in decency and in order. If an address is delivered it is not unusual that the voice of the speaker is drowned by the ringing of bells that call people to eat cold potatoes, tough beef, and dried apple pies; or by the vociferous screeching of some showmen, who announces that Prof. Dare Devil is about to enter the den of performing serpents; or that the highly moral exhibition of highly trained monkeys is ready to take place. Loafers and jockeys often blockade the entrance to the stalls where the finest horses are secured; and often the walks that lead past the pens of other animals are in so filthy a condition that women and children find it almost impossible to visit the various departments of animals.

As one of the principal objects of fairs is to afford the means of gaining information, it seems important that conspicuous signs be placed over the pens or stalls where animals of different breeds are confined, that the uninitiated may know where to look for every class of animals. Not every farmer's boy, and comparatively few grown persons engaged in other pursuits than farming, know the characteristic differences between the different breeds of cattle, horses, swine, sheep and poultry, and it is important that the best opportunities be afforded all such to gain the desired information. A living specimen of a Shorthorn, Devon or Jersey is worth all the cuts ever published to illustrate the peculiarities of each peculiar breed. It would also be desirable that conspicuous names be attached to every kind of fruit on exhibition, that novices may learn at a glance how to distinguish them. Persons who are familiar with all these things are apt to forget that many who visit fairs are not able to tell a merino sheep from a Cotswold, and do not know the difference between a Concord and a Black Hamburg grape. There is a difference of opinion regarding the propriety of placing the name of exhibitors in connection with their articles, but it is our belief that it is a good practice. —*Prairie Farmer.*

HARVESTING ONIONS.

First we suppose that the soil is a sandy loam, well drained, and that the seed was planted in accurate rows from 12 to 18 inches apart. The onions should be gathered when the majority of the tops have lost their green color, but before they have become dry, then on a bright, sunny day, when the earth is perfectly dry, we commence our pulling.

Our rows running north and south we commence at the northeast corner. Getting upon our knees between the first and second rows, we pull those of the second row that are within easy reach and lay them with their tops towards the east, and the bulbs a little west of the second row. We next pull those from the third and fourth rows, laying them with those of the second with the tops to the east; the first row is then pulled, turned and laid in the same way, thus leaving behind us a straight windrow, with the tops lying in the same direction; then commencing at the south end between the seventh and eighth rows, we pull the seventh row and lay them with their tops to the west; we now pull the sixth, fifth and eighth rows in the same way we did the third, fourth and first, thus forming a second windrow with the bulbs towards those of the first. The reasons for pulling them in this order are, that we can top the onions much more economically if they are laid with their tops in the same direction in the windrow, and the windrows are placed in pairs, the bulbs towards each other. And I think that in no other way can we secure this arrangement so easily as by the plan suggested; two rows of each four being simply pulled into position without turning; the third row receives all the turning needed by the motion of pulling, while only one row has to be carried in front of the body and turned by a separate motion.

The onions are left in the windrow for from two to eight days, or until the tops are thoroughly dried.

In the meantime the broad space between the windrows should be hoed and the weeds raked off, thus removing a great many seeds which if left would make trouble the next year. When the tops are thoroughly dry they should be cut off. For this purpose we provide ourselves with a large pruning knife, and a pair of sheep or of common shears and commencing at the south end of the first windrow we cut off the tops about three-fourths of an inch from the bulbs, tossing or rolling the bulbs to the centre of the space between this and the next windrow. The second windrow is then topped in the same way, the bulbs forming, with those from the first, a double windrow. While topping, the advantages of having the onions placed in the way suggested will be evident, as each onion can be scraped with the left hand, topped with knife or shears in the right, and thrown into the new windrow without any turning or loss of motion, the action becoming almost automatic.

While doing this, the onions can be easily assorted, the finer ones being thrown fully to the center, while the smaller are kept near the outside of the windrow, and any green or imperfect ones are left with the tops. If while in windrows the onions are exposed to a shower, or long continued damp weather, they should not be disturbed until after the ground becomes dry, when if any signs of sprouting or second growth appear, they should be stirred with a common hay rake. The onions should be left in the double windrows for from four to twelve days, or until they are thoroughly cured, which will be indicated by the outer skin flaking off, leaving a bright, hard surface beneath. As soon as cured they should be marketed or stored, if the latter they should be put into ventilated barrels, which may be made by cutting with a sharp hatchet a few holes about two inches square between the wider staves. In filling the barrels they should be partially filled while lying on their sides, so as to bruise the bulbs as little as possible. If they are to be stored the best place is a shed or barn floor, the aim being to keep them dry and at a low uniform temperature. They should not be spread or piled deeper than about eighteen inches or two feet, as they are liable to heat and sprout. If any signs of sprouting should appear, the lot should be raked over, and any damp or sprouted onions removed to a still dryer place. The onions can remain in the barn or shed through the winter, care being taken to keep them perfectly dry, and just before freezing to remove any damp, decayed or sprouting ones. On the approach of cold weather they should be covered with two or three feet of straw, and we should carefully avoid moving or jarring them in the least while frozen, as even the jar of a slamming door will induce decay in many that would otherwise keep perfectly well.—*Cor. Prairie Farmer.*

LARGE CHEESES.

A North Chester correspondent says:—"The mammoth cheese constructed last week consumed 7155 pounds of milk, and according to best computations will weigh 715 pounds when cured. We claim the largest cheese in the known world. Our cheese factory has proved a success from the start, over 200 cheese, averaging 35 pounds each, having been already manufactured, though the building was not completed till quite late in the season."

A cheese weighing 715 pounds is a big one, but New York rather takes it down. A mammoth cheese, weighing 3000 pounds, from one day's milking of 2200 cows, yielding 30,405 gallons, manufactured in Erie County, N. Y., has been deposited for exhibition in the international industrial exhibition at Buffalo. Chester must try, try again.

The Vermont State Fair which was held at St. Johnsbury this week does not appear to have been an improvement over those previously held in that State. The death of Henry Keyes, Judge Colburn and Edwin Hammond, the men who gave the society life, is having an effect upon the prosperity of the society. In looking over the reports for the Boston daily papers of this and other fairs that have been held, we are struck with the incompetency of the men who are sent out to make the reports. They seem to know more about ward caucuses and horse trots than they know about agriculture. In fact they have about as much fitness for the business as Judas had for heaven.—*Homestead.*

A newly elected and ambitious Texan constable boasted that he could "clean out" every inhabitant of the state. He began on one McCabe, and was killed before trying his hand on the rest of the census.